

VDFP LOGBOOK

May 06

Virginia Department of Fire Programs Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 3

Inside This Issue:

Message From VDFP Executive Director

Arson Awareness Week observed

Blackstone Burn Building dedicated

General Assembly passes fire service related legislation during 2006 session

Live fire training demonstration scheduled

New VDFP website unveiled

Training and Education Tips

Regional schools held statewide

Virginia Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service to be held

Ten fuel saving tips

Calendar of Events

From the Executive Director

Spring has finally arrived in Virginia and many of our first responders are facing increased calls related to wildland fires. This year has been one of the driest in recent years and our state partners at the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) have been busy providing resources to many localities across the Commonwealth as large fires have burned thousands of acres.

Motor vehicle crashes is another area of increased activity for our first responders. As the daily temperatures rise to comfortable levels, many citizens are traveling, despite high gas prices, to vacation destinations, or driving to sports and other outdoor activities. With the beginning of summer vacation season around Memorial Day, motorist traffic will greatly increase, presenting even more challenges to our Commonwealth's fire, rescue, and EMS responders. When the number of travelers increases, so does the number of vehicle crashes.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) has been very busy in both of these areas of fire department support. Recently, we joined our Emergency Support Function (ESF-4) partners at VDOF to support Patrick County local responders on the 3600+ acre wildland/urban interface fire on Bull Mountain. The two agencies worked in a unified command system to support the local incident commander with firefighting resources from surrounding counties. Although the fire consumed three homes and eight other structures, it was successfully brought under control within a few days.

Additionally, VDFP has been proactive in our efforts to improve the training and safety of highway responders by working on existing programs and new initiatives in this area. In cooperation with our state partners, VDFP just renewed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Virginia Office of EMS and the Virginia Association of Rescue Squads to provide a single vehicle rescue training program. This partnership enables us to deliver vehicle rescue training using standardized equipment from the three agencies, while combining the instructors for a larger cadre to better meet the high demands of this successful program. Vehicle rescue is dynamic in our profession as it presents new challenges to responders in hybrid vehicle technology, new fuel hazards, and hydraulic tool changes. We are committed to bringing that new information to our fire/rescue personnel. The safety of our fire/rescue/EMS community is paramount on the highways of Virginia.

Our annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service will be held on June 3rd at 12 p.m. This year's keynote speaker will be Mr. Ronald J. Siarnicki, Executive Director of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. We are delighted to have Ron join us for this year's ceremony. Please join us as we honor those Virginia firefighters who have given their lives to help our citizens. And while we honor our fallen brothers in Virginia, let's remember that June 21st is another day to focus on firefighter safety by participating in the Firefighter Safety Stand-Down Day.

Please check out our new and improved website at www.vafire.com, for the latest updates on training, events and VDFP programs.

Be Safe,



Aubrey W. "Buddy" Hyde, Jr.

Arson Awareness Week observed

May 7-13, 2006

RICHMOND, VA - - Governor Timothy M. Kaine has recognized May 7-13, 2006 as Arson Awareness Week in the Commonwealth of Virginia and called this observance to the attention of all citizens by official proclamation.

The theme for this year's Arson Awareness Week is *Wildfire Arson – Preparedness and Prevention*. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) sponsor Arson Awareness Week annually. The goal this year is to focus the public's attention on the wildfire arson problem, particularly in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).

In conjunction with Governor Kaine's proclamation, the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF), Virginia State Police (VSP), and Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) are encouraging citizens to be proactive in preventing, mitigating and preparing for wildfire arson.

Arson and other uncontrolled wildland fires pose a serious threat to lives, property, and natural resources in our rural and suburban communities. Conditions are particularly hazardous in the WUI, where structures and other human developments meet or intermingle with forests and grasslands. The damage associated with wildland arson, acreage and dollar losses, is more than all other causes associated with wildland fires.

"The intentional and malicious setting of woods on fire not only threatens our wildlands, but also endangers many lives, especially with so many homes being built within or adjacent to these wooded areas," said Russell Chandler, Division Chief of the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy. "Due to the increase of arson fires within our wildlands we have included a module in our Fire Investigator School that addresses unique tools and processes to investigate these type of incidents."

Preventative measures that citizens can take include clearing trees and brush, placing fuel tanks away from structures, incorporating landscaping efforts designed to provide a defensible space around structures, maintaining adequate outside water sources, maintaining adequate ingress and egress routes to facilitate firefighting efforts, and using fire-resistant noncombustible building materials in construction.

"No matter the intended target – a structure, vehicle, or wildwood – arson is a serious and potentially deadly crime," Lieutenant I.H. Matney, coordinator for the Virginia State Police Arson and Bomb Unit, said. "Virginia State Police agents investigated a total of 308 fires last year, that accounted for \$23 million in property losses. Of those investigations, 108 of them were determined to be arsons and 45 resulting arrests were made."

In the area of mitigation, citizens can assist by being vigilant and monitoring any suspicious persons and vehicles, forming Neighborhood Watch Programs, and supporting adoption of local WUI building codes and weed abatement ordinances for structures built near wooded areas.

Finally, be prepared in the event of a wildfire, whether arson related or naturally occurring. Call for help (use a cell phone if your electrical power has been interrupted); close all entrances, windows and other openings; have tools (shovel, rake and long water hose) and water accessible; dress to protect yourself; wet down the roof; turn off residential fuel; and be ready to evacuate your family and pets to a safe location if necessary.

For more information on prevention and preparedness, please visit www.firewise.org; www.firewisevirginia.org and www.ready.gov. For more information on Arson Awareness Week, please contact the USFA at 888-603-3100.

Blackstone burn building dedicated

The new, state of the art, Southside Fire Training Commission burn building was dedicated April 1 in Blackstone, VA during ceremonies attended by local and state officials, fire service representatives, local fire and rescue personnel, and family and friends.



Notable attendees included, Ray Draper, president of the Southside Fire Training Commission; Aubrey W. "Buddy" Hyde, Jr., Executive Director of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and keynote speaker; The Honorable Thomas C. Wright, Jr., Delegate from the 61st District; Lora Sharkey, Chairman of the Virginia Fire Services Board; James Harris, Mayor of the Town of Blackstone; Larry Palmor, Blackstone Town Manager; David Dunn, Blackstone Assistant Town Manager; Mayor Henry H. Crittenden of the Town of Crewe; Mayor Joseph F. Morrisette of the Town of Burkeville; Jonathan L. Pickett, Planning Director of Prince Edward County; Blackstone Town Council Members; and Leonard Enz, Partner in Charge with RDG Planning & Design.



The building, designed by RDG Planning & Design of Chicago, IL, is a 6,700 square foot cast-in-place concrete and masonry structure four stories tall. It is designed to simulate a variety of residential, commercial, and institutional building conditions as well as situations that public-safety personnel will experience in the line of duty. The building is engineered to accommodate NFPA training for live fire evolutions, search and rescue, laddering evolutions, vertical and horizontal ventilation, rappelling, breaching, confined space, horizontal trench ventilation, and mask confidence scenarios. The structure has been designed to train with Class A fires; however, the building is designed to accommodate future gas-fired training props, including a stove fire with flashover grease fire and electrical panel fire.

"The building is an excellent training facility for every firefighter throughout the state of Virginia," said Draper. "In my personal opinion it's one of the best in the state that I've seen."



The Southside building is one of eleven new facilities under construction now in the Commonwealth of Virginia, along with four ongoing renovation projects. Each year these buildings are constructed using the Burn Building Grant Program, which receives funding from the Fire Programs Fund of \$975,000 annually.

A unique aspect of the Southside burn building project is that it resulted from a partnership between the Town of Blackstone and Prince Edward County. The two localities were able to maximize the dollars available by combining their grants of \$325,000 each, along with an additional \$75,000 in funding approved by the Fire Services Board for a total of \$725,000.



"What you see here today is a modern fire and rescue training facility that is as nice as any of the facilities that you will see in a large metropolitan area," noted Executive Director Hyde in his remarks. "This state of the art facility will provide quality training for firefighters here, and people who travel here for many, many years to come."

"Today, engineers know more about how to make these live fire training facilities withstand the damaging effects of heat and fire, which allows the service life to go a little longer. We feel comfortable that this building will take us well into the future of the Commonwealth of Virginia firefighters using it. We're all just extremely proud of the Southside Fire Training Commission project and what they've accomplished."

General Assembly passes fire service related legislation during 2006 session

The following are a few of the pieces of legislation passed during the 2006 Session of the Virginia General Assembly which directly impacted Virginia's fire service.

For a comprehensive listing please visit: http://www.vafire.com/government_affairs/legislation/state.htm.

House Bill 1390 – Firefighters; shall not require minor who achieved certification to repeat certification.

Patron: Clarke N. Hogan

Summary as passed House:

Firefighters; local ordinances. Provides that local ordinances shall not require a minor who achieved firefighter certification as administered by the Department of Fire Programs prior to January 1, 2006, and between the ages of 15 and 16 to repeat the certification after his sixteenth birthday.

House Bill 1579 – Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board; membership.

Patron: Benjamin L. Cline

Summary as introduced:

Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board; membership. Amends the membership of the Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board to include two members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and one member of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. This changes the membership of the Board from seven members to 10 members.

Senate Bill 97 – SOL assessments; fire drills, etc. prohibited in schools during periods of mandatory testing.

Patron: Harry B. Blevins

Summary as introduced:

Fire and evacuation drills prohibited in schools during periods of mandatory testing. Requires the Board of Housing and Community Development to promulgate regulations prohibiting fire and evacuation drills in schools during periods of mandatory testing required by the Board of Education. The bill includes an enactment clause requiring the promulgation of emergency regulations.

Senate Bill 498 – Fire Programs Fund.

Patron: Phillip P. Puckett

Fire Programs Fund. Authorizes the Virginia Fire Services Board to revise allocations to eligible localities.

House Bill 1004 – Office of Commonwealth Preparedness; provides for appointment of director by Governor.

Patron: Beverly J. Sherwood

Summary as passed House:

Office of Commonwealth Preparedness. Makes permanent the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness and provides for the appointment of a director by the Governor to serve a four-year term. The bill sets out the duties of the Office and also creates the Secure Commonwealth Panel and sets out its membership and duties. The bill contains technical amendments.

House Bill 1390 – Firefighters; shall not require minor who achieved certification to repeat certification.

Patron: Clarke N. Hogan

Summary as passed House:

Firefighters; local ordinances. Provides that local ordinances shall not require a minor who achieved firefighter certification as administered by the Department of Fire Programs prior to January 1, 2006, and between the ages of 15 and 16 to repeat the certification after his sixteenth birthday.

House Bill 1418 – Line of Duty Act; payment of benefits

Patron: Terrie L. Suit

Summary as introduced:

Line of Duty Act; payment of benefits. Increases from \$75,000 to \$100,000 the amount for which a beneficiary of a deceased person whose death occurred while in the line of duty as the direct or proximate result of the performance of his duty is eligible to receive.

House Bill 1579 – Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board; membership.

Patron: Benjamin L. Cline

Summary as introduced:

Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board; membership. Amends the membership of the Volunteer Firefighters' and Rescue Squad Workers' Service Award Fund Board to include two members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and one member of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. This changes the membership of the Board from seven members to 10 members.

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Fire and evacuation drills prohibited in schools during periods of mandatory testing. Requires the Board of Housing and Community Development to promulgate regulations prohibiting fire and evacuation drills in schools during periods of mandatory testing required by the Board of Education. The bill includes an enactment clause requiring the promulgation of emergency regulations.

Senate Bill 363 - Commonwealth Preparedness, Office of; created.

Patron: William C. Wampler

Summary as introduced:

Office of Commonwealth Preparedness. Makes permanent the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness and provides for the appointment of a director by the Governor to serve a five-year term. The bill sets out the duties of the Office and also creates the Secure Commonwealth Panel and sets out its membership and duties. The bill contains technical amendments.

Senate Bill 498 – Fire Programs Fund.

Patron: Phillip P. Puckett

Fire Programs Fund. Authorizes the Virginia Fire Services Board to revise allocations to eligible localities.

Live fire training demonstration scheduled



A live fire training demonstration is scheduled for Tuesday, May 23, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Henrico Division of Fire Training Drill Center located at 10403 Woodman Road, Glen Allen, Virginia.

The demonstration, hosted by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP), will include a live-fire evolution, rappelling, heavy and technical rescue demonstration, and other exciting exhibits.

Beverages (water, juice, Gatorade) and a light lunch will be provided after completion of the demonstration.

Individuals participating in the exercise should wear comfortable, all cotton clothing. Personal protective equipment will be provided. Fit testing for self contained breathing apparatus will be conducted on site Tuesday morning. Facial hair (beyond moustache) and makeup must be removed if you plan to participate in the live-burn.

If you plan to participate or simply attend, please RSVP to Christy King at 804/371-0220 or christy.king@vdfp.virginia.gov by May 16, 2006.

New VDFP website unveiled



The newly designed VDFP website was officially launched on April 7, 2006. In addition to boasting a new look and feel, the site meets the VA Information Technology Accessibility standard and the world wide

web consortium (W3C) standards for useability and functionality. An important objective was to create a user focused Web presence for the Commonwealth, including a common look and feel to all Agency websites. Initial feedback from end user's of the new website has been overwhelmingly positive.

VDFP FYI

SAFETY/TRAINING TIP

Gas Monitor Calibration

When was the last time that you calibrated your gas monitor? Remember that the units are only as effective as the last calibration. Many models allow you to use a bump gas for your own in-house calibration. If you have not conducted a test in the last year, please ensure the safety of your personnel by having the units tested by staff personnel or contracted to an agency certified to calibrate your monitor. In addition, check the battery to be sure it's operational and not expired. Be safe!

PUBLIC EDUCATION TIP

First Aid Kits

In an emergency, a family member or you yourself may be cut, burned or suffer other injuries. If you have these basic supplies you will be better prepared.

- Two pairs of latex or other sterile gloves
- Sterile dressings to stop bleeding
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towels to disinfect
- Antibiotic ointment to prevent infection
- Burn ointment to prevent infection
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Eye wash solution to flush the eyes
- Thermometer
- Prescription medications you take daily
- Prescribed medical supplies, such as blood pressure and glucose monitoring equipment

Remember, many injuries are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention. Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference.

Regional Schools held statewide



Flowers in bloom. Robins. Shouts of "Play Ball." All of these are sure signs of Spring. And in the Virginia Fire Services, there is one other telltale sign: Regional Schools.

In March and April alone seven schools were held: Southside Virginia (Mar 18-19); Danville/Pittsylvania (Mar 25-26); Albemarle County (Mar 25-26); Top of Virginia (Apr 1-2 & Apr 8-9); Southhampton County (Apr 1-2); Caroline County (Apr 22-23); Central Shenandoah Valley (Apr 29-30).



Hundreds of students were trained at each of these schools on topics such as Emergency Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Rescue, NFA Incident Safety Officer, Confined Space Entry and Rescue, EMT Basic, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and many more.



"The Regional Schools provide a wonderful opportunity for firefighters and rescue personnel to hone the skills they need to provide the highest level of service to our citizens," said Tom Berry, Division One Chief. "There is a lot of effort devoted toward realistic training evolutions using the latest equipment and techniques."



Virginia Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service to be held



The 2006 Virginia Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service will be held Saturday, June 3, 2006 at 12:00 p.m. at the Richmond International Raceway Horticulture Garden, Richmond, Virginia. This annual service honors those Virginia firefighters who have died while serving our citizens.

The service will be held (rain or shine) with a reception immediately following the service. Parking is available (free of charge) through Gate 4 off of Laburnum Avenue.

Complete information on this year's service will be covered in the next issue of the Logbook. For more information regarding the service, contact the Virginia Department of Fire Programs at 804/371-0220.



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Virginia Department of Fire Programs

1005 Technology Park Drive,
 Richmond, VA 23059-4500
 Phone: 804/ 371-0220
 Fax: 804/ 371-3444
 E-mail: vdfp.mail@vdfp.virginia.gov

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

Virginia Fire Service Professional
 Development Consortium Meeting
 May 17, 2006
 Glen Allen, VA

2006 Pulaski Regional Fire School
 May 20-21, 2006
 Pulaski High School, Pulaski, VA

Live Fire Training Demonstration
 May 23, 2006
 Henrico Division of Fire Training Drill Center

June

Virginia Fire Services Board Meeting
 June 2-3, 2006
 Richmond, VA

2006 Virginia Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service
 June 3, 2006 12:00 p.m.
 Richmond International Raceway Horticulture Garden

July

2006 Fire Instructor College
 July 7-9, 2006
 Roanoke College, Salem, VA

Ten Fuel Saving Tips

You may have noticed that the cost of gasoline has been a bit steep lately. Here are a few ways you can get the most out of whatever you're paying at the pump.

1. Keep your windows closed, especially at highway speeds. Air drag reduces mileage.
2. Inflate your tires to their proper level. This is not only more fuel efficient, it's also safer!
3. Avoid driving at higher speeds. Tests have conclusively shown that fuel efficiency declines as your speed increases (over 40 mph).
4. Try to maintain a steady road speed. The best way to accomplish this is by not tailgating.
5. Time your driving to avoid getting "caught" by stop-lights.
6. Shift your automatic transmission to neutral when you are stuck at a standstill in stop-and-go situations.
7. If you know you'll be sitting in one spot for more than 60 seconds, shut the car's engine off.
8. Shop around for different gasolines. Some cars run better on certain brands.
9. Keep your car in top mechanical condition (tune ups, oil changes, air filter replacement, etc.)
10. Purchase gasoline at the coolest time of the day (early morning, late evening) when it is densest.

Finally, consider buying a more fuel efficient car. Assuming you drive 15,000 miles a year and gas costs \$3.00 per gallon, the cost savings between a car that gets 30 mpg versus 20 mpg is a whopping \$750!